

Recalls

• **CARS—National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)** has announced the recall of all 1970–1974 Porsche Model 914's for correction of fuel system problems which could result in engine compartment fires.

Actual recall will take place some time in late summer because repair kits have to be made and assembled by Volkswagen A.G. in Germany and shipped to the US. Porsche owners will be notified by the manufacturer when repair kits are available.

NHTSA urges all owners of Porsche 914's, regardless of model year, to seek repairs if they notice (1) a strong odor of gasoline in the passenger compartment, (2) obvious signs of fuel system deterioration, or (3) fuel stains on the surface under parked vehicle.

Ford Motor Co. announces recall of 1975, 1976 and 1977 Econoline Vans and Club Wagons so that it can install pads on the instrument panel to protect passengers from severe cuts in the event of an accident or sudden stop [See CONSUMER NEWS June 1 page 1].

The recall will begin in October after the needed parts are built and will be installed by dealers at no cost to owners.

• **COOKIES—Food & Drug Administration (FDA)** announces the recall of 2,040 283 gram (10 oz.) packages of Archway Chocolate Chip Ice Box Cookies. Package code July 23.

The cookies, manufactured by Merit Baking Co., Boone, IA are glass contaminated and contain nuts which were not declared on the label.

The cookies were distributed in Iowa, Nebraska, Minnesota, Kansas, Missouri and Arkansas.

• **SOUP—Food & Drug Administration (FDA)** announces the recall of condensed vichyssoise soup (also labeled Condensed Cream of Potato Soup on some brands) in 1.47 kilogram (3 lb. 4 oz.) cans.

The soup, manufactured by Specialty Foods Co., Inc. of Johnson City, NY was underprocessed and may cause bacterial growth.

The soup cans are coded lot number NDFW6, and labeled under the following brand names: NIFDA (National Institutional Food Distributor Associates, Inc.); Claybourne (Clayco Foods, Inc.); Specialty Brand (Specialty Foods Corp.); Railton (B.A. Railton Co.); Nuggett (Nugget Distributors, Inc.); Hudson Valley Brand (Catskill Grocery Co., Inc.); Tartan (Alfred Lowry & Bros., Inc.) WB (CFS Continental).

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consumer news

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
Office of Consumer Affairs

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Notice to home owners

If you own a home which was purchased on or after Jan. 1, 1973 and prior to Aug. 3, 1976, and the mortgage was insured by **Housing and Urban Development Dept.** (HUD) under Section 203 or Section 221 of the National Housing Act, you may be eligible for reimbursement or correction of structural or other major defects in your home. The deadline for filing a claim for reimbursement or correction of defects is Aug. 3.

Homeowners may be eligible for reimbursement if all of the following requirements can be met: (a) The dwelling must have been more than one year old at the time of purchase; (b) the dwelling must consist of not more than 4 living units; (c) the defect must be one which so affects the use and liveability of the property as to create a serious danger to life or safety; (d) the defect must have existed at the time of the original appraisal and be one which a proper inspection by the HUD inspector would have normally revealed; (e) the mortgage must have been insured under Section 203 (b) or Section 221 (d) of the National Housing Act, on or after Jan. 1, 1973, but prior to Aug. 3, 1976, and the dwelling must be located in an older, declining area.

The following are examples of defects which may enable homeowners to receive assistance: (a) Defective plumbing, heating or electrical systems; (b) structural failures in floors and foundations noticeable in accessible areas; (c) a worn out roof; (d) drainage problems such as surface water in the crawl space or running against the house; (e) rotted siding, porches, steps, deteriorated brickwork, or other seriously deteriorated exterior surfaces which affect the structural integrity of the dwelling; (f) defective paint which, as defined in HUD regulations, constitutes a health hazard such as cracking, scaling, peeling and loose lead-based paint on interior surfaces and those exterior surfaces, such as stairs, porches, windows and doors readily accessible to children.

If you think you may qualify for assistance, call your local HUD office and request an application. Your written application must be received by the local HUD office no later than Aug. 3.

New process recycles auto oil

A new process for re-refining old auto crankcase oil, developed by the Bartlesville (OK) Energy Research Center (BERC) of the **Energy Research and Development Administration (ERDA)**, does not generate the polluting byproducts current re-refining processes do, according to ERDA. The new method produces oil that has passed strict performance tests in Iowa State University fleet vehicles.

BERC estimates that 1.1 billion gallons of crankcase oil are used annually in the US, much of which could be recycled by the new process without adding pollutants to the environment and then made available to consumers at competitive prices. And, ERDA points out, the quality of the recycled oil can be superior to new oils.

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OCA comments

The **Office of Consumer Affairs** (OCA) regularly analyzes proposed Federal regulations and issues comments and opinions to the issuing agencies whenever proposed regulations would seem to have a significant impact on consumers. Below is a summary of a recent comment prepared by OCA which should be of particular interest to consumers. In drafting its comments OCA expresses positions which it feels best reflect consumer needs and concerns. Copies of this comment may be obtained free of charge from the Office of Consumer Affairs, Room 621, Reporters Bldg., Washington, DC 20201.

Federal Reserve System (the Fed) has proposed regulations which would simplify Truth-in-Lending disclosure statements by eliminating terms and sections that are not considered helpful or meaningful to consumers while causing substantial difficulty in creditor compliance.

In commenting, OCA supported the proposed changes. The complex and technical terms and provisions in current disclosure statements are not understood by the average consumer, OCA said, and they tend to detract attention from more fundamental information, such as the total amount of the finance charge or the annual percentage rate, which are more helpful to consumers when making judgments on credit.

However, OCA recommended that the Fed require creditors to disclose on request the detailed terms and provisions that would be eliminated from the disclosure statement under this proposal. This would insure that consumers—who are more knowledgeable about credit terms—would have access to this information.

OCA also suggested that the Fed publish a series of sample disclosure statements for lenders to use in designing their own forms, thereby promoting uniformity. Finally, OCA said that the proposed changes could significantly reduce compliance costs for lenders and that these cost savings could be passed on to consumers.

New name

Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has announced the appointment of Albert H. Kramer to the position of director of FTC's Bureau of Consumer Protection.

Kramer, 36, was a member of a Washington law firm and his practice included litigation before Federal courts and regulatory agencies.

Recycled oil (Continued from page 1)

Two decisions yet to be made by the Federal Government will have a great effect on the availability and cost to the consumer of oil re-refined by the BERC process. First, ERDA must rule on BERC's request for funds to design a demonstration re-refinery plant to produce approximately 10 million gallons annually. (This would be a large plant compared to existing re-refineries but relatively small compared to the big crude, or new, oil refineries.) If ERDA approves the request, BERC estimates that design would take approximately one year and construction 2 more so that it would be 3 years before production begins. Second, if **Environmental Protection Agency's** (EPA) standards for boiler emissions preclude the use of old untreated crankcase oil as supplementary fuel because it contains relatively high amounts of toxic pollutants, an estimated 480 million gallons annually (more than a third of the crankcase oil used each year) would be freed for re-refining by the BERC process. Obviously this would help keep the raw material price for re-refined oil low. CONSUMER NEWS will report on these developments as they occur.

Diamonds are whose best friend?

Selling diamonds for investment purposes is not necessarily illegal or immoral; it just may be fattening the bankbooks of promoters at the expense of the unwary.

The sales pitch is a natural. For generations, the persecuted, fleeing foreign lands, have converted their resources to diamonds because they are easy to hide, light in weight, and there was rarely a problem bartering them for goods, cash or services. Many refugees living in America today can attest that if it were not for diamonds they wouldn't be here. In the US, however, the possibility of widespread flight to escape political, racial or religious persecution appears remote. Nevertheless, there is a growing group of promoters pushing "investment grade" diamonds—stones of low quality at high prices. It is exciting to think they might earn as much as stocks and bonds—unglamorous pieces of paper stashed away in a vault.

A diamond of any value should never be purchased without a certificate from the Gemological Institute of America or a lab of equal integrity. Only a responsible jeweler will know what is required. Fraudulent salespeople may refer you to fraudulent labs which in turn will give fraudulent appraisals. While the **Securities and Exchange Commission** (SEC) has not issued any specific guidelines covering investment grade diamonds, they could come under SEC's jurisdiction and vendors would have to be registered—depending on how the investment is packaged.

Diamonds *have* increased in value the last 5 or 10 years, but there also has been unprecedented inflation over the past decade. Even as a hedge against unusually high inflation, small diamonds would have to be held at least 5 to 10 years to make even a very small profit.

Those who buy diamonds for investment rather than for romance could be in for the shock—and loss—of their lives. *Caveat emptor.*

New consumer guide

Help: The Useful Almanac 1977-78 is a new publication prepared by Consumer News Inc., an independent publisher (not affiliated with CONSUMER NEWS). Almanac offers tips on daily living and lists thousands of public and private consumer offices and sources of help. *Help* is available from bookstores or by mail—\$4.95 postpaid—from Consumer News Inc., 813 National Press Bldg., Washington, DC 20045. Phone 202-737-1190

Mail schemes

Postal Service (PS) has published the following list of companies it believes are using false representation to obtain money or property through the mails. PS says it has sufficient evidence to show that these companies are in violation of the law.

CONSUMER NEWS has previously reported that consumers were taken for an estimated \$514 million in mail fraud schemes during the last fiscal year [See CONSUMER NEWS March 1 page 1].

Calhoun's Collectors Society, Inc.
US Bicentennial Gold Set
1 Appletree Square
P.O. Box 1218 and Box 9474
Minneapolis, MN 55440
and
P.O. Box 3539
St. Paul, MN 55165

Regarding sale of "The Gold Nations of the World Gold Stamp Issue."

E-Pill
2001 NW 7th St.
Miami, FL 33125
and
Box 6712
Miami, FL 33154
and
Coupon Special-E and E-Pill
1190 NE 125th St.
Suite 30
Miami, FL 33161
and
Super E-Pill
1613 Alton Road
Miami, FL 33139

Regarding sale of a product called "E-Pill."

Fran-Mar Diet
and
Fran-Mar Enterprises
P.O. Box 130
Rockvale, CO 81244

Regarding sale of a product called "Fran-Mar Diet."

Ginseng II
and/or
Tam Company
1 Wolfs Lane
Pelham, NY 10803

Regarding sale of the products called Ginseng II or Ginroy.

Gray's Amusements
Bessemer-Mt. Jackson Road
New Castle, PA 16102

Regarding a service concerning the appearance of "Santa Claus" at the remitter's home.

Mark Hunter
Box 2608
Sepulveda, CA 91343

Regarding the sale of a guaranteed method for assured potency and larger male organ.

Nutrient Laboratories, Inc.
P.O. Box 80308
Chamblee, GA 30341
and
P.O. Box 81105
Atlanta, GA 30366
and
P.O. Box 95543
Atlanta, GA 30347
and
P.O. Box 4283
New Windsor, NY 12550
and
P.O. Box 2511
Newburgh, NY 12550

Regarding sale of a product called "The Skin Vitamin."

Pompie
P.O. Box 9313
Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33310

Regarding the sale of the products called the "Bust Toner Kit" and the "Firm-Up Bust Massage Creme."

Progressive Sales Group
(or any variation thereof)
P.O. Box 310
New Rochelle, NY 10804

Regarding sale of product called the "P.S.G. Pumpometer."

Mail help

If you are having postal-related problems of a law enforcement nature, PS says you should contact the closest **Inspection Service** headquarters.

Postal Inspector in Charge
Main Post Office Bldg.
Devonshire and Milk Streets
Boston, MA 02107

Postal Inspector in Charge
US Post Office Main Office Bldg.
Eighth Ave. & 33rd St.
New York, NY 10001

Postal Inspector in Charge
Post Office & Court House Bldg.
Federal Square
Newark, NJ 07101

Postal Inspector in Charge
General Post Office Bldg.
30th & Market Streets
Philadelphia, PA 19101

Postal Inspector in Charge
Centre City Towers
650 Smithfield St.
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

Postal Inspector in Charge
City Post Office Building
North Capitol St. & Mass. Ave.
Washington, DC 20013

Postal Inspector in Charge
US Postal Service
P.O. Box 3180
Memphis, TN 38103

Postal Inspector in Charge
US Post Office & Court House
Georgia Ave. & E Ninth St.
Chattanooga, TN 37401

Postal Inspector in Charge
US Post Office Federal Annex
S Forsyth & W Hunter Streets
Atlanta, GA 30302

Postal Inspector in Charge
US Post Office Bldg.
Lancaster & Jennings Streets
Fort Worth, TX 76101

Postal Inspector in Charge
US Post Office & Customhouse
E Kellogg Blvd. & Jackson St.
St. Paul, MN 55165

Postal Inspector in Charge
US Post Office Bldg.
Canal & Van Buren Streets
Chicago, IL 60607

Postal Inspector in Charge
General Post Office Bldg.
1401 West Fort St.
Detroit, MI 48232

Postal Inspector in Charge
US Post Office & Court House
Walnut St. & Government Square
Cincinnati, OH 45201

Postal Inspector in Charge
200 S Hanley Rd.
St. Louis, MO 63199

Postal Inspector in Charge
Main Post Office Bldg.
3rd Avenue & Union St.
Seattle, WA 98111

Postal Inspector in Charge
P.O. Box 367
San Francisco, CA 94101

Postal Inspector in Charge
P.O. Box 30456
Los Angeles, CA 90030

Recalls (Continued from page 1)

The soup was distributed in New York, New Jersey, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Michigan, Georgia, Florida, Colorado, California, South Dakota and Ohio.

• **TUNA—Food & Drug Administration (FDA)** announces completion of a recall of Bumble Bee Brand solid white tuna in water and Bumble Bee chunk light tuna, some of which contained cat food instead of tuna.

FDA said no health hazard was involved if a consumer accidentally ate the cat food instead of the higher grade tuna intended for human use.

Amtrak's Amfleet

Amtrak's largest order of new equipment—492 "Amfleet cars"—has been completed. The cars with their all-electric heating, air-conditioning, and air suspension cost \$206.3 million.

Of the 492 cars, 361 are Amcoaches, 54 Amcafes, 40 Amclubs and 37 Amdinettes. Amcoaches have either 84-seat capacity for shorter distances or 60 seats for longer runs.

The Amcafe, Amclub and Amdinette have food and beverage counter service located in the center of the car. The Amcafe has coach seats in both ends while Amclub provides all first-class seating. The Amdinette has a dining area consisting of 8 tables seating up to 32 persons in one end and regular coach seats in the other.

Since Amfleet cars began operation in July 1975 they have traveled over 55 million miles on short and medium-distance runs. Modernization of Amtrak's long-distance trains begins this fall when the first of 284 bi-level cars go into service between Chicago and Seattle.

Federal publications

Transportation and the Elderly and Handicapped—A Literature Capsule is an 83-page **Transportation Dept.** publication that summarizes information compiled since 1970 on transportation of the elderly and handicapped. Single copies are available without charge by writing to R.V. Giangrande, Technology Sharing Program Office, Transportation Systems Center, Kendall Square (Code 151), Cambridge, MA 02142; telephone 617-494-2648.

How to Use USDA Grades in Buying Food is a recently updated **Agriculture Dept.** publication showing official grade marks used on meat, eggs, poultry, dairy products, and canned, fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables. It explains what the grades mean for each of these products and gives tips on how to use the various grades. Single copies are available free by writing to Agriculture's Southeast Regional Information Office, 1718 Peachtree St., NW, Atlanta, GA 30309. Ask for Home and Garden Bulletin No. 196.

Consumer Information Brochure is the second in a series of consumer education pamphlets published by the **Federal Deposit Insurance Corp.** (FDIC). Publication describes consumer protection laws enforced by FDIC for banks within its jurisdiction. Pamphlet also includes a detachable form for submitting bank related complaints or inquiries to FDIC. Copies may be obtained free from Federal Deposit Insurance Corp., Publications and Graphics Service Branch, 550 17th St., NW, Room 825, Washington, DC 20429.

Look Out for Yourself!—Helpful Hints for Selecting a School or College is a new brochure from **Health, Education, and Welfare Dept.** (HEW) which provides answers to questions students ask when choosing a post-secondary educational institution. Free copies of this brochure may be ordered from the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Education (Policy Communication), Room 309G, 200 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20202.

First Aid is a new pocket-sized reference guide for first aid published by **Interior Dept.** The booklet describes how to provide emergency treatment for such medical emergencies as heart attack, severe bleeding, burns, shock and choking. For your copy send \$0.80 to the Consumer Information Center, Dept. 120E, Pueblo, CO 81009.

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